

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A coupling device (20) for restraining belts, particularly for ~~children~~ children's safety seats for motor-vehicles, comprising

a body (21) ~~intended~~ adapted to be connected to at least one belt branch,

and a pair of tongue elements (10) ~~intended~~ each adapted to be connected ~~each~~ to a respective belt branch, wherein each tongue element (10) includes an attachment portion (10b) for connection with the respective belt branch and a stem portion (10a) arranged to be received and locked in the body (21), said stem portion (10a) ~~forming~~ defining a catch tooth (10e) for locking the tongue element (10) in the body (21), ~~characterised in that~~ wherein each tongue element (10) ~~comprises~~ includes a metal insert (12) wholly covered by a plastic or rubber housing or coating.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A coupling~~ Coupling device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the plastic or rubber coating or housing of each tongue element (10) is ~~overmoulded~~ overmolded over the metal insert (12).

3. (Currently amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the metal insert (12) of each tongue element (10) comprises an ~~essentially a~~ substantially flat portion (12a, 12b) having a first part (12b) extending into the attachment portion (10b) and a second part extending (12a) into the stem portion (10a) of the tongue element (10), and a limb (12c) is arranged substantially at a right angle with respect to the said

4. (Currently amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the body (21) comprises a latching mechanism including locking means (31) arranged to be moved in a ~~perpendicularly~~ perpendicular direction to the direction of insertion/ejection of the stem portions (10a) of the tongue elements (10) into/out of the body (21) from a coupled position, in which the said means engage the catch teeth (10e) of the tongue elements (10) to prevent the latter from being ejected from the body (21), and a released position, in which the said means disengage from the catch tooth (10e), thus allowing the ejection of the elements (10) from the body (21).

5. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the latching mechanism further includes a control pushbutton (25) arranged to be moved parallel to the direction of insertion/ejection of the stem portions (10a) of the tongue elements (10) into/out of the body (21) to control the movement of the locking means (31) in the said released position.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 5, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the said locking means ~~comprise~~ comprises a locking rod (31) and in that the control push-button (25) comprises ~~at least~~ a ramp-like portion (37) forming a slanted surface (37a) adapted to work together with the locking rod (31) to prevent the latter from moving to the released position.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 6, ~~characterised~~  
~~in that wherein~~ the control push-button (25) forms a projection (33) adapted to retain the locking  
rod (31) in the coupled position when both the tongue elements (10) are inserted into body (21) .

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 4, ~~characterised~~  
~~in that wherein~~ the latching mechanism further includes a pair of slider elements (30), each  
associated ~~to~~ with a respective tongue element (10), ~~wherein the said slider elements (30) can~~  
~~being adapted to~~ slide parallel to the direction of insertion/ejection of the stem portions (10a) of  
the tongue elements (10) into/out of the body (21) and are biased by a spring so as to react to the  
insertion and facilitate the ejection of the tongue elements (10).

9. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 8, ~~characterised~~  
~~in that wherein~~ the said locking means comprise a locking rod (31) and in that the said slider  
elements (30) are arranged to prevent ~~the~~ a locking rod (31) from moving to ~~the~~ a coupled  
position when both the tongue elements (10) are not inserted into the body (21).

10. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 5, ~~characterised~~  
~~in that it~~ which further comprises identification means (38) associated ~~to~~ with the push-button  
(25) for ~~showing~~ indicating to the user whether the device is in the coupled position or in the  
released position.

released position.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 1, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the said tongue elements (10) are provided with connecting members (10d,10e) for ensuring the alignment of the tongue elements (10) when these are inserted and anchored in the body (21).

12. (Currently Amended) ~~Coupling~~ The coupling device according to Claim 11, ~~characterised in that wherein~~ the said connecting members (10d,10e) comprise at least a projection (10d) formed by the one tongue element (10) and ~~at least~~ a cavity (10e) provided in the other tongue element (10) ~~to receive~~ for receiving the respective projection (10d).

13. (New) A coupling device for restraining belts, particularly for children safety seats for motor-vehicles, comprising

a body adapted to be connected to at least one belt branch, and  
a pair of tongue elements each adapted to be connected to a respective belt branch, wherein each tongue element includes an attachment portion for connection with the respective belt branch and a stem portion arranged to be received and locked in the body, said stem portion forming a catch tooth for locking the tongue element in the body,

wherein the body comprises a latching mechanism including locking means arranged to be moved in a perpendicular direction to the direction of

from a coupled position, in which the said means engage the catch teeth of the tongue elements to prevent the latter from being ejected from the body, and a released position, in which the said means disengage from the catch tooth, thus allowing the ejection of the elements from the body, the latching mechanism further includes a control pushbutton arranged to be moved parallel to the direction of insertion/ejection of the stem portions of the tongue elements into/out of the body to control the movement of the locking means in the said released position.